

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-119 are currently pending. Claims 1, 19, 27, 38, 57, 61, 83, 101, and 109 have been amended by the present amendment. The changes to the claims are supported by the originally filed specification and do not add new matter.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-119 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,202,092 to Takimoto et al. (hereinafter “the ‘092 patent”).

Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for the interview granted Applicant’s representative on October 21, 2008, at which time the outstanding rejection of the claims was discussed. In particular, the role of the manager disclosed in the ‘092 patent was discussed. No agreement was reached on the patentability of the claims.

Amended Claim 1 is directed to a printing system, comprising:

a printing apparatus;

a terminal apparatus for transmitting information including a request to execute a specific print job and for receiving information;

notification means for notifying a registered user of said printing apparatus of information on authority of the registered user to use said printing apparatus to execute any print job prior to the transmission of the request to execute the specific print job to be printed by the printing apparatus, but after the registered user has established access to use of said printing apparatus, wherein the notification means is unaware of the specific print job when notifying the registered user, and wherein the registered user is unable to set the authority of the registered user to use said printing apparatus; and

a network connecting said printing apparatus, said terminal apparatus, and said notification means so that information transmission and reception in the system is performed through an electrical signal via said network.

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the registered user (who is notified by the notifying means) is unable to set the authority of the registered user to use the printing apparatus. The changes to Claim 1 is supported by the originally filed specification and do not add new matter.¹

The '092 patent is directed to a print system including a shared printer on a network in which the authority of each user to use the printer is set in a security database. After a print request, including the number of sheets to be printed, is sent to a security validating device, the '092 patent discloses that the security validating device decides whether authorization to use the printer is to be granted based on the restrictions on the user maintained in the database and the status of the user.²

However, Applicant respectfully submits that the '092 patent fails to disclose means for notifying a registered user of the printing apparatus of information on authority of the registered user to use the printing apparatus to execute any print job prior to the transmission of the request to execute the specific print job to be printed by the printing apparatus, wherein the registered user is unable to set the authority of the registered user to use the printing apparatus, as recited in amended Claim 1. Rather, the '092 patent discloses that a request by the client to execute a specific print job occurs before any type of notification to that user. Further, Applicant respectfully submits that the '092 patent fails to disclose that the

¹ See, e.g., paragraph [0008] in the published application which states that "it is often a manager of apparatuses (including printing apparatuses) that sets the access right of each user, so that the users are prevented from being informed immediately of changes in their access rights. . . . In these cases, it is only after requesting the print job to be executed that each user is informed whether she/he is authorized to use the printing apparatus." Further, the '092 patent discloses that, if the printing is authorized, the printing is completed and the status of the user is updated in the security database. Thus, the specification clearly distinguishes between a manager who sets the access rights of each user, and the users that use the apparatus who are not informed that they are unable to use the apparatus until after they have already requested a print job. Further, paragraphs [0009]-[0011] in the published application clearly state that the objective of the claimed invention is to notify users when their access rights have been changed or established by the manager. Thus, a "user," as that term is consistently used in the specification and claims of the present application is a user who is unable to set the authority of the user to use the printing apparatus, and therefore needs to be notified of their authority to use the printing apparatus. As the specification makes clear, the entire point of the invention is to notify users when, e.g., a manager has altered their access rights.

² See '092 patent, column 4, line 64 to column 5, line 14.

notification means is unaware of the specific print job when notifying the registered user, as recited in Claim 1. Rather, in the '092 system, the specific print job is sent to the server as the initial request.

As shown in Figure 2, the '092 patent discloses that, in step S3, the system checks whether the user has management authority when there has not been a print request. If the manager has input his user ID, the security database can be modified and/or read. Applicant respectfully submits that this branch of the flowchart shown in Figure 2 is unrelated to the system recited in Claim 1, which requires notification means for notifying a registered user who is unable to set the authority of the registered user to use the printing apparatus. Thus, the notification means recited in Claim 1 notifies users other than managers. Thus, the fact that a manager in the '092 system is able to view the database and modify the database is irrelevant since the notification means recited in Claim 1 notifies registered users who are unable to set the authority of the registered user to use the printing apparatus. The operation panel of the printer in the '092 system does not notify users who are unable to set the authority of the registered user to printing apparatus of their authority to use the printing apparatus to execute any print job prior to transmission of a request to execute the specific print job, as required by Claim 1.

In particular, Applicant respectfully notes that it is irrelevant whether the manager in the '092 system is also a user, as emphasized by the Examiner in the interview. Claim 1 required notification means for notifying those users that are unable to set their authority to use the printing apparatus, which would exclude, by definition, the managers in the '092 system. Further, Applicant notes that the user recited in line 19 of column 4 of the '092 patent is a user who is authorized to read and modify the database, which refers to the previous paragraph describing managers. Again, Claim 1 specifically excludes such users.

Accordingly, for the reasons stated above, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection of Claim 1 (and all associated dependent claims) as anticipated by the '092 patent is rendered moot by the present amendment to Claim 1. As Figure 2 of the '092 patent makes clear, an initial print request is sent before any type of notification to a registered user, contrary to the requirements of amended Claim 1.

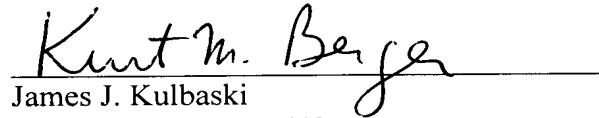
Independent Claims 19, 27, 38, 61, 83, 101, and 109 recite limitations analogous to the limitations recited in Claim 1. In particular, each of the independent claims has been amended to clarify that the registered user who is notified is unable to set the authority of the registered user to use the printing apparatus. As discussed above, this limitation is not disclosed by the '092 patent. Accordingly, for the reasons stated above, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejections to the independent claims (and all associated dependent claims) are rendered moot by the present amendment to the independent claims.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claims 1, 19, 27, 38, 61, 83, 101, and 109 (and all associated dependent claims) patentably define over the '092 patent.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the above discussion, the outstanding grounds for rejection are believed to have been overcome. The application as amended herewith is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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